

# Great Britain

Taking a moderate course- from  
Reactionism to Accommodation

Classical Economics

Liberalism

Utilitarianism

# Putting Out system to Factory System

- By the 1820s Great Britain was involved in a full-fledged Industrial Production
- Textile Production had moved to Factories
- Railroads first created to bring coal from the mines to the rivers, soon became used for transportation of all types of goods as well as people
  - George Stephenson's "Rocket" hit an amazing speed of 35mph in 1828
- Canals were built as well to ease the transportation burden
- New Industrial Production demanded coal for its fuel and Iron for its machinery. Northern England had abundant coal and iron resources, cities like Newcastle and Manchester would witness enormous growth

# Economic Liberalism Prevails

- **Adam Smith-** "Wealth of Nations" became the Capitalist's Bible
  - People acting in their own self-interest benefit everyone
- **Thomas Malthus-** Essays on the Principle of Population
  - Populations grow geometrically, food production grows arithmetically
- **David Ricardo-** "Principles of Political Economics" supported a "laissez-faire" attitude
  - **Iron Law of Wages-** Demand and Supply determine wages
  - **Comparative Advantage-** Free Trade Theory- opposed to Corn laws

# Government abolished Guilds and Trade Unions

- Late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century “enlightened thinking” Guilds and Trade Unions were determined to “”
- Consistent across Europe- aided by the Napoleonic Wars
- Guild laws were part of the “ancien regime”
  - Alienated trades people
- England- Combination Acts (1799) banned unions and worker organizations

# Fear of the Sans-Culotte

- Throughout Europe, the “Reign of Terror” and the resulting Reactionism led to constant fears of uprisings by the urban poor
- Political liberals (not the same meaning as “liberal” today) saw the urban poor as uneducated and uncouth, Conservatives likewise wanted to maintain a stable system and “riots” exacerbated the problem.
- Urbanization meant that cities were quickly growing- Development of the First Police Departments in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century-
  - By 1850 more than ½ British population lived in Towns

# DON'T GIVE

## Let the Poor to their own devices

- Jeremy Bentham- utilitarianism – (cost/benefit analysis)→ society should be based upon the premise of bringing happiness to the greatest # of people
  - Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century thinking was to abolish public relief for the poor- disincentive
- Periodic poor harvests led to substantial increases in grain prices hurting the poor
- 1834 Poor Law- make poor houses undesirable- social stigma

# English Workhouse



# Corn laws passed and then repealed

- Corn laws- mercantilist policies to protect domestic industries
- 1815 Parliament passed a Corn law to protect local grain production
- 1846 Corn laws repealed, consistent w/Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage
  - (in part due to Irish famine- open ports to foreign grain for distribution in Ireland)



# Reform- Not Yet-

## Peterloo Massacre 1819

- Reformers branded “Radicals” sought change
- New Anti-progressive tax laws favored wealthy over others- income tax abolished, sales/excise taxes increased.
- 1817 Coercion Acts passed to – suspended habeas corpus and laws against meetings
- 1819- Manchester (St. Peter’s Fields- Peterloo) – Royal troops fire on mass meeting- 11 killed!- radicals arrested
- Parliament passes “6 Acts”- repressive measures to stop “unauthorized public meetings” and search homes
- Cato Street Conspiracy confirms Parliaments worst fears- leaders executed

# The Times they are a Changin'

- Whig reformers return to the scene
- Combination Acts repealed
- Catholic Emancipation Act passed (1829)
- 1832- Great Reform Bill-
  - Brought more fair representation of the new urban areas to Parliament
  - Greater enfranchisement –though still quite limited
  - Beginnings of accommodation and future reform

# More Laws! That protect workers

- Concerns raised for Women and Children
  - English Factory Act of 1833
    - Banned employment of children under 9
    - Limited Workweek for 9 to 13 yrs old
    - Mandatory education for empl. Child
- Demand for laws protecting others
  - 1847 -TEN HOUR DAY MANDATED

# Radical Ideas

- Chartism- “London Working Men’s Association”
  - First Large scale workers movement
    - Controlled a few city councils
  - “Radical” Demands- Six Points
    - Universal male suffrage
    - Annual elections House of Commons
    - Salaries for Parliament members
    - Secret ballot
    - Proportional election districts
    - No property qualifications for Parliament
- Luddites- English
  - Return to the Past- skilled craftspeople who want to destroy the new modern machinery- threatened by it

# Britain Avoids 1848 Revolutions

- Through accommodation-
  - Whig reform parties
  - Protection of worker's rights
    - Limited, strongest for children
  - Repealing of Reactionary laws
  - Fast growing economy
  - Expansion of Political Rights
    - Enfranchisement remains limited
    - Proportional representation still favors wealthy, rural areas over urban areas

# Radical Economic Ideas

- Utopian Socialism
  - Saint Simonianism- French- Management by a group of experts- radical ideas on sex and marriage
  - Owenism- Industrialist- good surroundings make for good character
    - New Lanark- success, New Harmony – failure
  - Fourierism- Romantic view- boredom of “industrial” life- alternate work- also radical on sex and marriage

# Karl Marx-

## Communist Manifesto

- Worked with Industrialist-, Friedrich Engels
- Saw the rise of discontent leading to 1848 Revolutions
- Hegel's dialectical process brought to economic life- Scientific theory
  - Class Conflict has cycled through history
    - 19<sup>th</sup> Century- Bourgeoisie v. Proletariat-
    - Eventual Revolution
- Communism- abolition of all private property

# Anarchism

- Pierre Proudhon
  - “system of small business”
  - Credit should be available to all
  - State is unnecessary
- Anarchism becomes more prevalent in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and leads to the assassination of several political leaders in Europe and the United States



# Turner- Paintings

- Predated French Impressionists- 1844  
Turner Painting Railroad



# Industrialization in rest of Europe

- France and German territories both witnessed substantial increases in rail production- lagged well behind Britain
- German areas Saar Basin and Ruhr Valley- substantial coal deposits
- Redistribution of land in France made a strong but conservative peasant population- political instability help fuel economic problems
- Eastern Europe lagged much further behind, still largely agrarian, though coal and iron production existed in those countries as well. Serfdom remained an issue in Habsburg Empire (1848) and Russia only abolishes Serfdom (1861)